The Middlebury Campus

VOL. CXXI, No. 5 | MIDDLEBURY, VERMONT, OCTOBER 13, 2022 | MIDDLEBURYCAMPUS.COM

Women's team of Middlebury Club Soccer raises Title IX concerns

Tom Nevins/The Middlebury Campus

The women's team of Middlebury Club Soccer practices in Virtue Field House.

By ABIGAIL CHANG & AMANDA MANOOGIAN
Editor in Chief and Staff Writer

The Middlebury women's club soccer team brought complaints to the Title IX Office last spring regarding the Student Activities Office's (SAO) refusal to grant them official club status separate from the men's team, where captains said club funding was not being distributed to them. While the current captains of the women's team expressed frustration about the lack of shared resources between the teams, they told The Campus that their main concern was how the situation was handled by college employees.

Middlebury Club Soccer (MCS) was founded as a co-ed organization in fall 2021. While the men's team applied to join a competitive league in the spring ahead of their fall 2021 official start date, the women's team did not join a league until this fall. But even though they were not part of a league last year, the women's team still competed against Dartmouth, Amherst and other teams in the area, according to current Co-Captain of the Women's Team Eleanor Pontikes '22.5.

The current captains of the women's team, Pontikes and Emily Ribeiro '24, said the team did not receive funding throughout last year. Pontikes told The Campus the women's team paid out of pocket for travel costs for games during the 2021–22 academic year, and they could not host home games because they did not have funds to pay for referees and EMTs. They also struggled to find funding for jerseys and to come up with funds for the league fee in May 2022 for their fall 2022 season. The team secured jerseys through Varsity Women's Soccer Coach Peter Kim but "did not have the means to pay him back," according to Pontikes. Pontikes said she and Ribeiro met with the SAO last week to discuss the issue and make a plan to repay Kim.

Blaise Siefer '23.5 and Marco Fengler '23.5 founded the co-ed team in 2021 after a two-year process to get the team off the ground. Though the club was co-ed, Siefer and Fengler said the men's and women's teams developed at different rates and therefore joined competitive leagues at different times. Siefer and Fengler intended to have separate men's and women's branches for league competition while maintaining a co-ed club for practices, social events and other club activities. The college is also required to offer equal opportunities for participation in sports for men and women under Title IX.

Student organization budgets are distributed by the Student Government Association Finance Committee (SGAFC), and SAO's Student Organization Handbook states that all new organizations, such as Middlebury Club Soccer

Continued on Page 2

VTDigger hosts debate series ahead of the 2022 midterm elections

By LILY JONES
News Editor

VTDigger, a newspaper based in Montpelier, Vt., hosted a series of debates this fall in the lead-up to the 2022 midterm elections. The series included the candidates for Vermont's open U.S. Senate and House seats as well as Vermont's gubernatorial race.

Race for U.S. Senate seat: Gerald Malloy (R) vs. Peter Welch (D)

The U.S. Senate debate took place on Sept. 8 in Manchester, Vt. Republican candidate Gerald Malloy, a conservative with a background in business, faced off against Vermont's current House Representative, Democrat Peter Welch. The candidates disagreed on inflation, abortion and immigration.

Malloy was critical of the Inflation Reduction Act — passed in August with spending allocated for budget deficit reduction and lower prescription drug costs—and Biden's student loan forgiveness plan, voicing concerns over the increasing federal debt. Meanwhile, Welch characterized the upcoming elections as fundamentally about protecting democracy, and said he would support the Electoral Reform Act and consider reform to the structure of the U.S. Supreme Court.

When asked by the moderators why he is qualified to serve Vermont after only living in the state for two years, Malloy responded that his experiences in business and as a combat veteran equip him to be the best candidate for Vermont.

As a newcomer to politics, Malloy argued that D.C. is failing Vermonters, while Representative Welch emphasized that his 15 years of experience in Congress have demonstrated his ability to be an effective lawmaker.

This race marks the end of an era in Vermont politics. With the retirement of Patrick Leahy, who has been in the Senate for the last 48 years, it is the first time a U.S. Senate seat in Vermont has opened since 2007.

According to polls from the University of New Hampshire (UNH) and the Trafalgar Group, Welch is ahead of Malloy.

Race for U.S. House seat: Liam Madden (R) vs. Becca Balint (D) vs. Ericka Redic (Libertararian)

Three candidates vied for Vermont's sole U.S. House seat — open for the first time in 15 years as Welch runs for Senate — in an online debate held on Sept. 15.

Vermont state Sen. Balint (D-Windham) highlighted her 8 years as president pro-tempore of the Vermont Senate, whereas Madden emphasized his service as a Marine and his leadership in the anti-Iraq War movement. Both Madden and Redic characterized Balint as an insider politician, while Balint embraced her lawmaking experience.

Continued on Page 3

LOCAL

Childcare shortage in Vermont means long waitlists for college faculty

By MAYA HEIKINNEN
Editor at Large

On top of balancing classes, meetings and the challenges that come with living in rural Vermont, college faculty with young children face an additional burden: finding and retaining childcare.

The college has worked to alleviate the problem through efforts, such as the continued subsidization of College Street Children's Center (CSCC) and a project joining and expanding CSCC and Otter Creek Children's Center (OCCC), as well as providing flexibility for professors. However, the childcare shortage in Addison County stems from deeper statewide issues with understaffing of these centers due to insufficient pay and funding.

According to the Addison County Chamber of Commerce website, there are eight centers classified as childcare, preschool or kindergarten in the county. This list does not seem to include some of the centers in the county that The Campus heard about while reporting this story. Aurora Preschool and the Bridge School were not on the list as of press time, as well as the College Street Children's Center, which is located on college property and subsidized by the college.

Local childcare centers in Middlebury such as OCCC, which currently enrolls 44 children in infant through preschool care, serve not only Addison County but also neighboring counties. According to Executive Director Linda January, OCCC serves about 17 different towns total and a mix of families from Addison, Rutland and Chittenden counties.

"The makeup really reflects the larger social and economic makeup of Addison county," January said. "We have some dual-income families, we've had families who are connected with [the Department for Children and Families] that might be in the foster system, we have children who are being raised by grandparents, families who are in school trying to improve their education, single [parent] families; we are really as diverse as you can get in Vermont."

Evergreen Preschool, located in Vergennes, serves 34 children ages 3 and 4. While two-thirds of its kids come from the Vergennes area, the remaining third reside in Hinesburg, Starksboro, Bristol, Monkton, New Haven and Middlebury. According to Program Director Ashley Bessette, Evergreen's waitlist is not so long since infant care — which is especially limited in Vergennes — is in greater demand. She added that many families send their children to Evergreen out of proximity, while others are attracted to its social-emotional development teaching model.

"For the families that are traveling a ways, I think they really believe in the education that we offer and our philosophy on childhood development, and what kids in preschool really need to thrive," Bessette told The Campus.

January said she has observed a steady decrease in childcare capacity statewide over the past few years, with centers closing or changing capacity for various reasons, but there was never enough capacity.

"There's been a couple of preschools in the public schools that have closed that eliminated some preschool spots," January said. "Covid has exacerbated some of those reasons, but I think in general the trend has been a decrease from year to year, or steady."

The waitlists for spots at local childcare centers are long for any level, but demand is higher for infant care, January said. This is because infant care inherently requires a higher intensity of care and staffing, though these spots do tend to open up at OCCC each year.

For parents, the limited capacity for infant care spots means having to join waitlists months, or even years, in advance of anticipating a need for childcare. Getting off these waitlists can be a matter of sheer luck, said Paul Hess, assistant professor of Physics and a new member of the CSCC Board of Directors.

"We tell everybody that we know who's planning on having a kid, as soon as they get pregnant or even when they're thinking about it; it's good to get on the waitlist for childcare centers because those waitlists are long," Hess told The Campus. "We've been lucky to get a spot, but, really, it was just luck in that another family decided to keep their kids home."

> For parents, the limited capacity for infant care spots means having to join waitlists months, or even years, in advance...

Not every family is lucky enough to land a childcare center spot off a waitlist, and even finding a temporary or year-long solution does not guarantee long-term childcare security. After using a nanny share with another faculty member during the 2020–21 academic year, Jennifer Ortegren, professor of religion and member of the CSCC Board of Directors, had to move in with in-laws in Pennsylvania for the summer in order to secure childcare. After calling centers all summer, Ortegen was able to get a part-time spot at CSCC for the year but still had to find another part-time caregiver and schedule classes around the arrangement.

"Finding people is an incredibly time-consuming and stressful experience in part because there are not many options. We have been able to find wonderful caregivers, but it's such a source of stress coordinating with potential other families and caregivers, etc.," Ortegren wrote in an email to The Campus. "And because CSCC doesn't offer preschool, we've already started all over trying to get on lists, etc. It just is an ongoing source of stress and anxiety."

At the start of the pandemic, some childcare centers shut down for several months

Continued on Page 5

NEWS

Middlebury School in Kazakhstan to launch in spring 2023
By SUSANNA SCHATZ

Middlebury Mountain Club to travel to Peru for Thanksgiving trip
By MARS ETGU

▶ PAGE 2

LOCAL

Vermont State Parks offers guided hikes programming throughout Addison County
By CHARLIE FISCH

Ripton votes yes to return to Addison Central School District
By JULIA PEPPER

▶ PAGE 5

OPINIONS

Middlebury needs better mental health infrastructure
By RAIN JI

It's not just about wages — respect is the bare minimum, too
By THE EDITORIAL BOARD

▶ PAGE 7

ARTS & CULTURE

Niche Reads: Novel recommendations for the arts
By SYLVIE SHURE

Cocoon performers share stories on theme of "lost and found"
By SOPHIA AFSAR-KESHMIRI

▶ PAGE 8

SPORTS

Crew hosts Vermont Cup
By CHARLES CROUNSE

Seven questions with Tatum Peskin, women's cross country
By CHARLIE KEOHANE

▶ PAGE 11

MIDDLEBURY SCHOOL IN KAZAKHSTAN TO LAUNCH SPRING 2023

By SUSANNA SCHATZ
Local Editor

A new Russian language study abroad program in Kazakhstan will begin next semester, a decision made in July of this year as the Middlebury School in Russia remains suspended indefinitely. Russian is one of the two official languages in Kazakhstan.

The Middlebury School in Kazakhstan will partner with two local universities in Kazakhstan's capital city, Astana, Narikbaev KAZGUU University and Nazarbayev University. The college has yet to finalize a contract with Nazarbayev University but expects to do so in the next few weeks, according to Director of Media Relations Sarah Ray.

"Our School in Russia staff will also temporarily move to Astana to assist students with their needs," said Nana Tsikhelashvili, director and associate professor at the School in Russia.

After the School in Russia reopened after being closed due to the Covid-19 pandemic, a cohort of students arrived in Russia in January 2022. When Russia invaded Ukraine in late February, the U.S. and many European countries began canceling flights from Russia and ATMs began to run out of cash. Middlebury acted quickly to send students home.

"All students departed Russia in the beginning of March, and the program continued online, so students were able to complete their classes," Tsikhelashvili said.

Students who had planned to study in Russia during the 2022–23 academic year have been working to change their plans.

"Students who wish to study through Middlebury's program in Kazakhstan this spring, and who were already admitted to study at the School in Russia, could have their applications and acceptance transferred to the program in Kazakhstan," said Susan Parsons, assistant director of International Programs.

Sylvie Shure '24.5 had planned to study in Russia, but will now enroll in the School in Kazakhstan in the fall of 2023.

"From a personal perspective, it's been stressful having everything up in the air. But I try to be really mindful of the fact that this is a horrible war and my study abroad experience is not a main issue," Shure said. "I think it's fascinating to get to go and learn about this country and this culture that is pretty overlooked in terms of the American awareness."

Erin Chouinard '24, a third year Russian language student and Russian major, planned to attend Middlebury's school in Moscow this semester. With the suspension of the Middlebury School in Russia, however, she took the opportunity to study elsewhere.

"I ended up going to Armenia this summer. It's somewhere I probably never would have thought about going, and having gone there I made so many new friends," Chouinard said. "I maybe learned less about Russia but more about the small countries that the Soviet Union overtook, so it's a different perspective on Russia itself and a change from the Russian-centric view."

Chouinard also plans to study abroad at Middlebury's Oxford program in the spring, and in Kazakhstan next fall.

At the Middlebury School in Kazakhstan, students will live in the dorms of Nazarbayev University alongside local students. Students will also have access to the university's buildings such as sports facilities and the library.

"One of the main reasons we chose Kazakhstan as the location for the program was that the Russian language has an official status in the country and is widely spoken by the population," Tsikhelashvili said.

At Narikbaev KAZGUU University, students will be able to enroll directly, along with Kazakh students, in classes taught in Russian. Similarly at Nazarbayev University, students will enroll in Russian language classes as well as courses in other subjects taught in Russian.

"Russia and Kazakhstan have a common history with strong economic, humanitarian and cultural ties. In this respect, the difference will not be tremendous, although certainly students will be experiencing the Kazakh national flavor and learn about the contemporary politics and economics of Kazakhstan," Tsikhelashvili said.

Ella Bode '24, an International and Global Studies, Global Security major with a focus in Russian and Eastern Europe, chose another study abroad program when her plans to study in Moscow this semester were canceled. She is studying at the Middlebury Institute of International Studies at Monterey (MIIS) this semester.

"MIIS has a really good Russian program; right now I'm taking the highest-level 400 course, titled War and Peace in Russia, where we're staying up to date on the situation and trying to understand Russian motivations," Bode said.

It is still undecided whether the Middlebury School in Kazakhstan is a temporary option for Russian language learners or will be permanently added to Middlebury's slate of schools abroad.

"We are going to start it as a temporary location. In the long-term, when the program in Russia resumes, we will consider whether Kazakhstan will become a permanent addition to Middlebury's study abroad locations," Tsikhelashvili said.

Tsikhelashvili told The Campus that for its inaugural semester, the Middlebury School in Kazakhstan will welcome three undergraduate applicants from Middlebury and other institutions. In addition, a few graduate students looking to complete a Master's degree in Russian through Middlebury's Language Schools are considering studying in Kazakhstan for the spring semester.

"I have some friends who are studying in Latvia, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan right now and they all seem to be enjoying it. The war changed all of our plans, for sure, but it seems like we're all having good experiences anyway," Bode said, referring to her Middlebury friends who chose to study abroad elsewhere.

Courtesy of Nana Tsikhelashvili
Baiterek is a monument and observation tower in Astana, the capital of Kazakhstan.

Women's team of Middlebury Club Soccer raises Title IX concerns

Continued from Page 1

in the 2021–22 academic year, can receive a maximum of $1,000 initial allocation for the year. The SGAFC also has deadlines for making "new money requests" in the fall and spring semesters, after which organizations can no longer apply for more funds. The leadership of the men's team made several "new money requests" through the SGAFC to cover expenses beyond the $1,000 initial allocation, which covered games and travel for the men's team and a co-ed banquet, all of which totalled approximately $7,000 according to Fengler.

Ribeiro and Pontikes said the women's team did not receive any of these funds, and the two teams did not come up with a formal process for splitting funds until this academic year.

Siefer and Fengler, the founders of MCS, were the listed officers on the club's Presence page last academic year, meaning they were the only members of the co-ed organization who could see all of the club's budget information due to Presence's admin permission structure.

Pontikes noted that the women's team felt mistreated regarding the lack of sharing of resources between teams, but their primary concern was how their communication with SAO and, later, their complaint to the Title IX Office were handled.

The conversations between the women's team and the SAO began when they started to look into the possibility of splitting off from the men's team and forming a separate organization.

"We were trying to split initially [because] we felt like we'd operate better separately, but as the year went it became apparent that a split would be the only way to ensure equitable treatment and have a say in things," Ponitkes told The Campus via text.

According to the current captains, then-captain Hailey Kent '21.5 wanted to establish the women's team as a separate club and began working towards that goal last academic year. Kent reached out to the SAO in September of 2021, and again in November 2021 when she did not hear back. She got a response for the first time in January 2022.

"Every time we reached out to the SAO, they would either ignore us or tell us to talk to the boys," Ribeiro said. "Eventually, the administration [SAO] explicitly said that they wouldn't respond to us." The Campus reached out to four employees in SAO and has not received a response to questions about this claim as of press time. Pontikes and Ribeiro said they have gotten confirmation that the women's team will be able to separate from the men's team this year, but the formal process recently hit roadblocks due to understaffing in SAO.

"While we are aware of the organization's intent to split into two organizations, currently there is one co-ed Club Soccer organization. As such, funding was requested and granted to the one co-ed org," wrote Valerie Nettleton, director of student involvement and leadership development for the SAO, in an earlier email to The Campus.

"Dealing with college boys is a lot different than dealing with the administration. My frustration comes from the fact that they [the college] know what's going on and aren't doing anything about it," Pontikes said.

The team decided to speak with the Title IX Office at the end of the 2021–22 academic school year.

According to the NCAA, Title IX "requires the equal treatment of female and male student-athletes in the provisions of: (a) equipment and supplies; (b) scheduling of games and practice times; (c) travel and daily allowance/per diem; (d) access to tutoring; (e) coaching, (f) locker rooms, practice and competitive facilities; (g) medical and training facilities and services; (h) housing and dining facilities and services; (i) publicity and promotions; (j) support services and (k) recruitment of student-athletes."

"I didn't realize how gendered the situation was until I talked to my friends and professors, and they told me it violated Title IX," Ribeiro said.

Pontikes added that she initially hesitated to reach out to the office because she was worried about reacting like "an overly emotional woman." At the beginning of the summer, the team spoke with the Title IX Office. The office acknowledged the importance of the issue and told them there would be an investigation, with follow-up to come in late summer and fall.

The team has not heard back from the Title IX office.

"We later found out that the representative we met with was on leave," Pontikes said. "It surprised me that in the 50th year of Title IX, there was a vacancy in the office and no one stepped forward to support us."

The Title IX Office was unable to respond to these allegations when The Campus reached out.

"At the core of Title IX protections is a necessity to safeguard privacy, integrity of the process, and to work thoughtfully to reduce harm in our community. For that reason, we cannot disclose or discuss what we do or do not know about a question of this kind," Butterfly Blaise Boire, Civil Rights and Title IX coordinator, wrote in an email to The Campus.

While the issue from last year is not resolved, the co-captains said that fall 2022 has been running much smoother.

Pontikes, Ribeiro and the current captains of the men's club team, Duncan McCabe '22.5 and Otis Milliken '24, mutually decided to allocate equal funding for this year to both teams.

"We're splitting all the resources we have down the middle," McCabe said. The current co-captains of the men's team told The Campus that they also knew little about last year's financial situation.

While the women's team is still aiming to become an independent team, there has been considerable progress in establishing Middlebury women's club soccer.

"We don't need $10,000, we just want the basic necessities to have a season. I'm hoping for some sort of acknowledgment that lets us move forward," Ribeiro said. "It shouldn't be this hard to play soccer and it shouldn't be this different between the two teams."

"We started from the ground up and had over 50 girls show up to our tryouts this fall. I want this to be a hopeful message…despite all the hardships we've faced, the administration should care that over 50 girls want to play soccer. It makes me proud, and I feel like people should be aware of what we've been through," Pontikes said.

Editor's Note: Blaise Siefer '23.5 was a former Senior Sports Editor for The Campus. He is currently not a member of The Campus.

Managing Editors Tony Sjodin '23 and Rain Ji '23 contributed reporting to this article.

Middlebury Mountain Club to travel to Peru for Thanksgiving trip

By MARS ETGU
Contributing Writer

The Middlebury Mountain Club (MMC) has organized a fully funded hiking trip to the renowned Santa Cruz trek in Peru over Thanksgiving Break as part of its efforts to increase involvement and accessibility. The trip will last four days as eight students, including two guides, backpack 30 miles through mountainous terrain reaching elevations of 15,600 feet.

The trip's two guides, Megan Paluska '25 and MMC President Peter Streufert '24, began planning this trip in the spring and received approval from the Student Government Association (SGA) Operations Committee this fall, after a lengthy approval process. They decided on the Santa Cruz trek because of its reputation and ideal length of time for the break. They also considered the cheaper plane tickets to Peru and the warmer weather of the southern hemisphere during the fall when deciding where to go.

The trek will be the first international trip by the MMC since the start of the pandemic.

"For a while, we weren't even allowed to do overnight trips," Streufert said.

Before the pandemic, the MMC had a system of adventure grants where club funds were given to guides who took charge in leading trips over breaks. The club and school administration recently reevaluated that policy, as it lacked oversight of the safety of these trips. The club now directs that funding into fully funding larger trips like the Santa Cruz trek.

Streufert hopes that this trip is the signal of a transition back to normalcy for the MMC. He is in touch with outdoor clubs at Carleton College and Dartmouth College, where longer trips are common. MMC plans to follow their lead, as Streufert and Paluska hope to make such trips longer and more frequent at Middlebury.

"I would like to think of this trip as a stepping-off point for other international, farther, bigger Mountain Club trips," Paluska said. "And it's definitely an incentive for guides to lead more trips and be more involved, because they can lead and execute big trips like this."

The trip demonstrated a high demand on campus for international experiences. According to Paluska, there were 94 "highly qualified" applicants — twice the amount that they had anticipated — and only six available spots on the trip. Paluska and Streufert reviewed the applications anonymously and gave priority to those who had no prior international backpacking experience.

Nadia Hare/The Middlebury Campus
The gear room is located inside the Freeman International Center.

"There were a lot of applicants who were like 'Oh! I've been backpacking in Switzerland, and Argentina, and all these foreign countries' and we were like, that's really cool, but also there's a bunch of people on this who wouldn't normally have the opportunity to do this," Streufert said. "I think the point of this trip is giving people that opportunity. Out of the total eight [participants], almost no one has been backpacking internationally."

Paluska and Streufert were also interested in selecting participants who could speak Spanish, had some medical training or were experienced with wilderness medicine.

MMC will rely on the gear room, located in the basement of the Freeman International Center, to supply items for the backpacking trip. The gear room offers a wide range of supplies, such as rain jackets, hiking boots, SheFly hiking pants, rain pants and thick socks, which Streufert said alleviate the financial burden of participating in outdoor activities.

All students are welcome to use the gear room. "FIRE [Fostering Inclusive Recreation Experiences], which I'm the president of, uses a lot from the gear room," said Elise Chan '24, MMC head guide and head gear manager.

Those interested in using the MMC and the gear room can participate in MMC trips to come.

The MMC strives to help those interested in becoming guides by holding several informational seminars every semester where current guides teach others everything they need to know about leading a trip.

Introducing first-timers to the outdoors was one of the most rewarding parts of being a guide, according to Streufert and Paluska. Streufert said he led a rock climbing trip for first years two weeks ago, where two beginners discovered their love for the activity. Along with beginner-level trips, the club leads moderate and advanced trips, such as the Santa Cruz trek. They hope that these international opportunities will also expand to provide opportunities for all experience levels.

"I think it would be really cool to have beginner backpacking trips in really cool places and introduce people to backpacking that way," Paluska said.

They are still working on their plans for the trip, now meeting weekly with the selected participants to include them in decisions like the activities for the two-day period in Lima, Peru and other logistics.

"In the future, this could definitely be something that becomes a regular thing for Mountain Club if [the trip] goes well," Streufert said.

Editor's Note: News Editor Ryan McElroy '25 contributed reporting to this article.

Nadia Hare/The Middlebury Campus
The gear room offers a wide range of supplies, such as rain jackets, hiking boots, hiking pants and thick socks.

VTDigger hosts debate series ahead of the 2022 midterm elections

Continued from Page 1

The candidates disagreed on abortion regulation, with Redic saying the decision should be left up to states, Madden advocating for some restrictions on late-term abortions and Balint arguing that the decision should be up to the woman and her doctor.

Although he is running as a Republican, Madden calls himself an independent and says he will caucus either with both parties in turn or neither party. Redic criticized Madden's strategy, arguing that it will not benefit Vermonters.

Since August, Balint's campaign has come under scrutiny since August, when it was revealed that a cryptocurrency mogul donated a total of $1.1 million to the LGBTQ Victory Fund Federal PAC, which spent more than $990,000 on pro-Balint advertisements. Political action committees (PACs) can spend unlimited money in "independent expenditures" — including advertisements for a candidate — as long as they do not coordinate with campaigns. Balint responded that she did not know the person behind the PAC donation and has not been influenced by their agenda, but instead is focused on the agendas of Vermonters.

Balint, who currently leads the race by 38 percentage points according to a University of New Hampshire (UNH) poll, would be the first female and first openly-gay member of U.S. Congress to represent Vermont in the state's history.

Race for Vermont Governor: Phil Scott (R) vs. Brenda Siegel (D)

The two candidates for Governor of Vermont, Republican incumbent Phil Scott and Democrat Brenda Siegel, debated each other on Sept. 28 in Burlington, Vt.

Siegel, who spent a month camping on the steps of the Statehouse last year to protest lack of affordable housing, took issue with Scott's inability to fix the crisis as Governor. Scott responded that he has initiated record investments in housing, childcare and infrastructure development. He instead identified demographic issues and critical gaps in the workforce as the factors prohibiting economic growth.

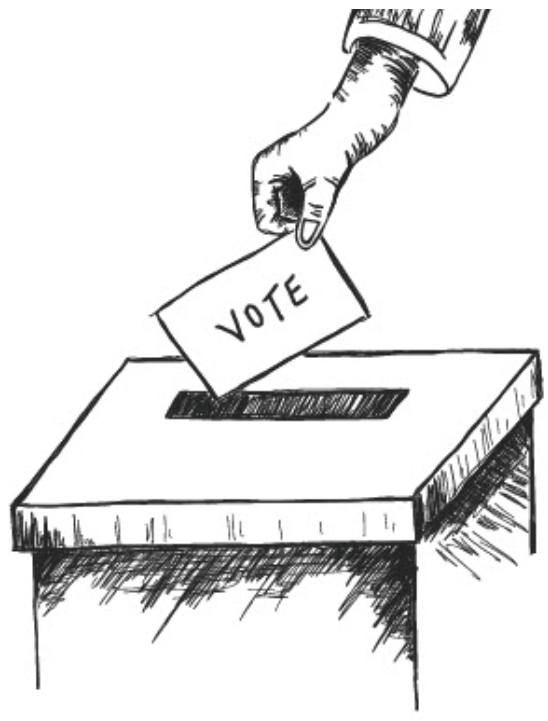
Siegel also challenged Scott's frequent use of vetoes, claiming he is disconnected from the Vermont legislature. Scott rebutted that he meets with the leadership in the legislature weekly.

The candidates also clashed over the opioid epidemic. Seigel criticized Scott's veto of a bill that would commission Vermont's third harm-reduction site, while Scott argued that the Burlington site would not have helped Vermonters in other areas of the state.

According to a UNH poll, Scott holds a 17-point lead over Siegel.

Race for Vermont Lieutenant Governor: Joe Benning (R) vs. David Zuckerman (D)

Current Vermont state Senator Joe Benning (R-Caledonia) debated former Lieutenant Governor David Zuckerman on Oct. 5 in an online-only event.



Susanna Schatz

Zuckerman and Benning differed on issues of taxation and government spending. Benning, a liberatarian-leaning Republican, argued for frugal state spending.

The two also clashed on climate change, with Benning arguing that Vermont's small population should not carry the burden of reducing emissions mostly caused by larger states. Zuckerman replied that investments in renewable energy would both decrease the state's emissions and benefit the finances of Vermonters.

The candidates mostly agreed on the issue of Act 250, a restrictive Vermont zoning law that some accuse of causing the state's housing crisis. They both advocated for the removal of bureaucratic red tape involved in housing development and agreed that the Act is worth keeping as it has helped preserve the environment.

According to a UNH poll, Zuckerman leads Benning by 16 percentage points.

News in Brief: Students report difficulties logging work hours in Oracle

By RACHEL LU
Editor at Large

Recently, some student employees have reported difficulties logging their hours via the payroll software Oracle, which Middlebury has been using for the past few years.

Salome Moreno '25 began working as a manager at the Language Tables this past August. According to Moreno, she expected the position to be reflected on Oracle as soon as she began working, but she realized that the position for manager at Language Tables was not visible in her online portal.

"The only option I saw was 'Middlebury Temporary Worker' so I began logging my hours under this title. However this was not my actual position, so I wasn't getting paid for a month of my work," Moreno said.

Alexis Welch '22.5 experienced a similar issue when she accidentally logged her hours under "Temporary Worker." When she attempted to correct the mistake, an error message appeared on her portal so she was unable to submit her timecards. The application later crashed and she was not able to be paid.

"It is tough because I worked around 30 hours and I still have not been paid. I live off-campus, and I pay for rent monthly, so it has affected me paying for things on time," Welch said. "It is frustrating that I need to put in a lot of time on the back-end because of an error I made in the beginning.

Vice President for Human Resources and Chief People Officer Caitlin Goss told The Campus that this may be a result of the new standard hiring timeline that Human Resources implemented this year for students and other employees.

"Student employees can now start in their jobs every Monday and their timecards are available by Thursday of that week in Oracle for them to enter hours," Goss said.

Goss explained that the Student Employment Office (SEO) noticed some students entering their timecards before the position was made available on Oracle, which resulted in them inputting hours through wrong positions. "Temporary Student Worker" is a default position in Oracle that shows up for all students so they are able to access the payroll software. "This job has a 0$ wage and no payment will be issued," the SEO explains in their timecard submission reminder emails.

Students who were affected may submit their hours for a previous pay period through an online form and receive retroactive payment in the following paycheck.

SEO also moved job listings from the PeopleAdmin software to Workable this past summer. Students and employees use Workable to apply for a position and move through the recruitment and hiring process.

"We made this change to improve the user experience of our applicants, hiring managers and our HR team," Goss said. "So far, we have heard lots of positive feedback about the tool being easier to navigate, having a mobile friendly user interface and having a lower barrier to completing an application."

Tom Nevins/Courtesy Photo
The office of human resources at Middlebury is located in Marble Works.

The change in software for hiring does not affect the process for students logging in their hours through Oracle. However, there is a learning curve for adjusting to Workable during the hiring process and SEO is working with hiring managers and supervisors to ensure a smooth transition.

Goss told The Campus that issues with Oracle have come up on a case-by-case basis and it does not appear to be a system failure. When these issues arise, Goss encourages students to email the SEO office.

"The SEO is very responsive to their emails," Moreno said. "They gave me the solution for retroactive pay and have been really helpful."

Tuesday and Thursdays 11:30 am to 2:00 pm
$5 Dr. Feel
GOODS
VEGETARIAN AND VEGAN OPTIONS AVALIBLE
PAY FOR ANY PURCHASE WITH YOUR DECLINING BALANCE CARD IN THE GRILLE ON TUESDAYS AND THURSDAYS BETWEEN 11:30 AM TO 2:00 PM FOR A CHANCE TO WIN $50, $25 OR $10 ON YOUR ACCOUNT!

Childcare shortage in Vermont means long waitlists for college faculty

continued from page 1

before eventually reopening with part-time hours and new protocols. According to Assistant Professor of Biology Eric Moody, this disruption was challenging but manageable due to the flexibility created by online learning.

"We had the choice of how to teach our classes, so that was nice in some ways. As a lab science professor, I still highly value having in-person labs, and I did, as soon as students came back to campus." Moody told The Campus.

Evergreen Preschool found that the pandemic made it necessary to hire an additional part-time "floater" to accommodate greater need for flexibility surrounding days off.

"What we've found is that teachers need more time off, whether they're sick, they were exposed, their kids were sick... in a normal year you need a day off here and there, but it was feeling like we all needed days a lot, " Bessette said.

While both professors and other community members alike have trouble finding consistent affordable childcare, both Moody and Hess noted the relative privilege many college professors have in being able to afford backup options, such as a private nanny, especially during uncertain pandemic times. Hess added that a professor's salary makes such options possible.

Although spots at CSCC are not in any way limited to college staff and faculty, Moody said it can seem to lean that way.

"Sometimes it feels that college employees might have an easier time getting their kids into some of those places, which sort of creates separate issues. So trying to do it in a fair way is certainly hard," he said.

Hess said making spots at CSCC exclusively for college employees would certainly benefit the college, but that is probably not possible for regulatory or funding reasons, and he prefers the more varied set of families the center currently serves.

"From our perspective it's nice to have a mix of kids from different socioeconomic backgrounds," he said.

According to both childcare providers and professors, the statewide shortage in childcare is a problem caused not only by increasing demand or the pandemic but also the constant struggle to keep childcare centers staffed as a result of insufficient pay, which was exacerbated by the pandemic.

"It's hard for all those places to keep up their staffing, when people could go do something else or may decide to leave the workforce during the pandemic, if they're not getting paid enough," Moody said. "Across the whole board, it seems the demand exceeds the supply."

Widespread undervaluation of childcare providers and the struggle for centers to attract and retain staff has the potential to limit both the careers of people in early childhood education and the options of parents unable to secure care. "Some people have to turn down jobs as a result," January said.

Bessette explained that the nature of working in early childhood education means that workers without a partner making more money often cannot afford to keep a job in a childcare center.

"A lot of people have left because the pay sucks, and they can't pay their bills. I think that's really unfortunate because there are people who are really good in the field who went on to do less impactful work because they got paid more and got benefits," she said.

Both Moody and Hess noted the relative privilege many college professors have in being able to afford backup options, such as a private nanny, especially during uncertain pandemic times.

In addition to pay, the childcare workplace environment is not sustainable, Bessette added. "We can't ask these people to work 55-hour work weeks without breaks, without planning time because we're constantly putting out fires, understaffed."

According to Moody, the frequent changes in staffing can also directly affect the quality of childcare and create social challenges for some children.

"For young kids, that turnover is really hard; it was definitely hard on our son. After he came back, when they did reopen full-time again, there was a lot of turnover with the teachers, and he wasn't familiar with them," Moody said.

The college is helping fund a project to combine OCCC and CSCC, which will improve capacity, but the end date is still at least two-and-a-half years out, January said.

"Expanding and increasing capacity is not easy, and it really takes a village to bring it together and make it happen in a meaningful way," she added.

Hess noted that expanding capacity won't be possible without being able to find staff. "Planning certainly needs to happen, and this is probably a place where the college can help also," he said. He suggested that getting students on work study or in the Education Department are possible solutions.

According to Ortegren, it is also important to consider benefits for childcare employees.

"For example, it is not currently feasible to offer health insurance than [sic] is better than the options on the federal exchange, but this means that if younger teachers age out of access to health insurance through their parents and don't have access to healthcare through a partner, finding a job that offers a benefits plan may be more attractive," Ortegren wrote.

At the college, while many departments work flexibly with professors, and the course schedule will even shift 8:00 a.m. classes in the spring to accommodate daycare drop offs, the communication and awareness could also alleviate the issue, according to Hess.

"Maybe for arriving new faculty members who have kids and are coming from somewhere where this isn't as much of an issue, which is true in a lot of places around the U.S., especially cities, the college can do a better job communicating to new faculty what the restrictions are, how they have to get on waitlists, maybe having some forums or something," Hess said.

Bessette also expressed appreciation for how the Let's Grow Kids agenda is trying to get childcare employees on par with salary and benefits for public school teachers, who make more money even though she and her teachers are licensed educators.

She noted that there is a need, however, for a shift in the perception and treatment of early childhood educators, which could even look like changes such as longer postpartum leave for professors to avoid needing to create more infant spots.

"I think we need to be really thoughtful about what we're asking of the early childhood educators, and I'm always saying we need to get the managers of companies, and businesses, and the college, on board to support families, to not have their kids in care for nine, nine-and-a-half hours a day. I think it's really hard to find the humans that are willing to cover that many hours so that other people can work," Bessette said.

Ripton votes yes to return to Addison Central School District

By JULIA PEPPER
Local Editor

Photo Courtesy of Steve Cash
Steve Cash is the chair of the Ripton School Board.

The town of Ripton has decided to remain in the Addison Central School District (ACSD) after a vote at the end of September. After a January 2021 vote to withdraw followed by a year-and-a-half long struggle for the town to establish an independent school district, Ripton residents have now voted to remain in the district that also includes Bridport, Cornwall, Middlebury, Salisbury, Shoreham and Weybridge.

Ripton's relationship to ACSD began in 2015, when the Vermont Legislature passed Act 46, a law that placed the many independent districts with their own school boards into centralized districts.

According to Molly Witters '01, the vice chair of the Ripton School District Board and the parent of a third grader at Ripton elementary school, the goal of Act 46 was to consolidate schools to improve organizational efficiency and better support schools by allowing them to share resources.

While the language of the law stated that it was not about school closure, a consequence is that some schools that have always been supported by their local communities, are no longer supported in the same way by the bigger districts. This has led to school closures, changes and depopulations. "The law was very contentious," Witters told The Campus by phone.

For Ripton, this meant a district plan that included the closure of their elementary school, which VTDigger reported enrolls about 45 students.

Ripton was one of the first schools to voluntarily consolidate, but Witters said consolidation eventually would not have been a choice. According to Witters, the Vermont Department of Education offered funding to help incentivize small independent districts to consolidate quickly and told them that if they did not consolidate, they might later be required to join a larger district anyway. Consolidation meant that schools with smaller enrollment that might once have been part of a town-wide district could form larger districts spanning multiple towns. In ACSD's case, the district is composed of nine schools across seven towns, including three in the town of Middlebury. However, consolidation remains an ongoing issue. Not all schools in the state have been consolidated into unified districts.

Following Ripton's consolidation, an 800-signature petition was presented to ACSD on behalf of Ripton, asking for changes to the school's charter.

"The charter change we have hoped for would give the town authority to confirm, via majority town vote, any decision around closure that the [district] board makes" Witters said.

Steve Cash, chair of the Ripton School Board, elaborated on this decision. The main goal of the proposed change was to make sure the district-wide school board was in step with the town. "There were two interests at the time. One was to change how voting was done, and make that more relevant on a town by town basis," Cash told The Campus. "Another change we had petitioned for was to give the town the final vote on a school closure. That's something that small towns, having had their own schools for years and years, have always had that vote. We felt that's important."

ACSD did not make the charter change Ripton had hoped for. "The board doesn't want to have its hands tied financially by keeping open a very small school. They want to keep closing a school... as a possible tool," Witters said. "This doesn't come from a place of malice, but our town always found a way to save our school [when it was independent]."

In January 2021, Ripton voted to leave ACSD due to concerns about the rejection of the petition and forced closure. This vote led to the creation of the Ripton School Board, under which Ripton would have functioned independently beginning in July 2023.

One big issue was the question whether Ripton could join another supervisory union. The Ripton School Board was interested in joining the White River Supervisory Union, based in the White River Valley, which combines independent schools and provides them with special education services, Human Resources and busing. The Vermont Board of Education rejected this request. Instead, they designated Ripton to be its own supervisory district, meaning that it would have to coordinate its own special education, Human Resources, and busing programs. Typical self-supervising schools have 900 to 1,000 students, while Ripton currently has around 60 students.

This designation of Ripton as its own supervisory district proved challenging. According to Cash, Ripton submitted a status report to the Vermont Board of Education this past summer, and the board voted that there was an overwhelming risk Ripton would not be able to function as its own supervisor.

After this vote, per Act 176, there was an option for Ripton residents to vote on whether to re-join ACSD. On September 29, the town voted to once again be a part of ACSD.

Cash and Witters both described the enormous amount of work that went into a process that eventually resulted in Ripton deciding to stay in the district.

"I've been to 40 school board meetings," Cash said. "That does not count my ten appearances before the State Board of Education... I don't think this process has been successful, from their vantage point or ours."

Witters echoed this sentiment. "It felt like we were in... a big circle of hard roadblocks that we went through for 19 months, and we kind of came back to the same place where we left," she said. But Witters said she does not regret the original decision to leave. "Our school would have been closed already if we hadn't done that," she said.

Fears remain that the Ripton elementary school may be forced to close. Cash mentioned talks with ACSD about the idea of Ripton rejoining the district, with protections against the closure of its elementary school in place, but the Ripton Board decided that would not be fair.

"We had some conversations in the School Board, and we said absolutely not. For the other small towns in our district, it's not fair. [It] just sets a precedent that really doesn't set up good relationships," Cash said.

Finally, an ad-hoc committee has been formed within ACSD on school closure. This subcommittee analyzes all the articles of agreement about school closure from across the state. There is a possibility the committee will decide to guarantee small schools in the district a legal say in advance of any closure.

"Ripton is still advocating for this change," Witters said.

"Our argument is that it's not that crazy what we're asking for," Witters said. "More than 50% of the boards across the state function like that." The ad-hoc committee will bring their findings to the full ACSD board at the end of the month.

Now that Ripton has voted to rejoin ACSD, the Ripton School Board will cease to exist. Ripton will be represented by one member on the ACSD board who previously served on the Ripton Board.

Witters reflected on her experience and her hopes for the future. "I want this to be a productive and not a destructive process," she said. "It's not like anyone's done anything wrong, it's just that everyone has different opinions on how to keep a healthy democracy."

The students at the Ripton school seem largely unaffected by the legislative happenings. Of course, if their school were to close that would present a big change. For now, however, Witters said her own daughter comes home from school happy, unaffected by the turmoil. "On the whole, the school has gone through some growing pains after consolidation... This is part of why I believe in staying with ACSD: to not go through those growing changes elsewhere, but to make those changes a productive thing," she said.

Cash said his larger goal is for an institutional mechanism to navigate situations of school closure within Vermont.

"If a small school has a concern, like their district charter, but they can't petition to have it changed, what is the process? It's not withdrawal. The question we started out with I don't really think has been answered," he said.

Vermont State Parks offer guided hikes programming throughout Addison County

By CHARLIE FISCH
Contributing Writer

Vermont State Park employees, in partnership with the Green Mountain National Forest, have organized a guided hikes program for Vermont locals in the Moosalamoo National Recreation Area, located between Middlebury and Brandon, Vt. New this year, the program ran from Labor Day to Indigenous People's Day and is planned to continue seasonally for the next two years. The last hike of this season took place on Sunday, Oct. 9.

The hikes showcase the Moosalamoo National Recreation Area's nearly 16,000-acre plot in the Green Mountain National Forest, about 20 miles from Middlebury. The hikes typically cover areas around Salisbury, Lester, Ripton and Goshen, Vt.

The program is funded by the Green Mountain National Forest and aims to help both locals and tourists explore the area while learning from the guides. The hikes vary in difficulty, making them accessible to people of various ages and skill levels, and they are free for everyone, excluding park entry fees.

Hikes this season covered trails such as Chandler Ridge, Rattlesnake Cliff and Falls of Lana in Salisbury, all of which are about ten miles from Middlebury College's campus. Rattlesnake Cliff is well known in the region for its breeding peregrine falcons and views of Lake Dunmore. The Falls of Lana hike features waterfalls and views of Rattlesnake Cliff. "Is It Really Ethan Allen's Cave?", a 1.5-mile out-and-back hike to Ethan Allen's Cave in Salisbury, educates hikers about Vermont and the Revolutionary War.

Photos courtesy of Jill Brooks

Jill Brooks, Branbury National Park park interpreter and hike guide.

Jill Brooks, a park interpreter at Branbury National Park, has been heavily involved in this year's programming. She and other Vermont State Park employees serve as guides for the hikes. Outside of this program, Brooks organizes programs for day visitors at the park, including campers and beachgoers. These programs include science education and activities geared toward children at Branbury National Park.

The hikes have helped participants get outside and engage with the area's historical and scientific significance, Brooks said. Tflu dawn of time 2020 whhey have encouraged hikers to become more connected with the nature around them. While the hikes are for people of all ages, this season Brooks has focused on creating hikes catered toward children, to help them interact with nature.

"A big part of the guided hikes is just being able to tell folks more about the areas we're exploring," Brooks told The Campus. "I've also been doing this fall as part of this programming some things that are geared more specifically towards kids, like doing a little story hour followed by an easy hike to a beaver dam that kids might be interested in." Not only do the hikes help participants engage with and appreciate nature, but they give people the chance to make connections with fellow hikers. Brooks said she has found the community building aspect to be a particularly special part of the program.

Brooks has been leading a program that begins at the Moosalamoo Campground and goes to the Voter Brook Outlook. "It's just like a three-mile round trip loop, but when we get to the overlook, we spend an hour there doing some watercolor painting, and that's been really fun," Brooks said. "[It is] such a great way to connect with nature and observe more deeply and have nice conversations with people," Brooks said.

The hikes have been popular among participants, particularly because they are accessible and free of charge. "The people who have come out on hikes and done the programming have really positive feedback and are often very impressed that this is just being offered for free in the community," Brooks said.

Despite the numerous educational and recreational benefits to the hikes, the program has not been as popular this year as organizers had anticipated. Brooks added that she had hoped turnout would be higher.

The program is set to receive funding for the next two years to continue leading guided hikes for locals. It will follow the same time frame, running from Labor Day through Indigenous People's Day. While exact plans for next year have yet to be finalized, organizers intend to format the hikes similarly to this year. The location of the hikes is also expected to remain the same, but with goals to expand onto different trails in the area. Brooks said she hopes new hikes will give participants the opportunity to interact with areas that are not as well known.

"I think it would be great to try to focus on leading hikes on trails that people might not be as familiar with in the local area," Brooks said.

Brooks emphasized that the hikes are free and available to everyone, regardless of age or skill level. She hopes to boost the hikes' popularity for the next season in fall 2023 and encourages Middlebury College students to look into the program next year.

More information about the hikes and upcoming events in Addison County can be found on the Addison County Independent Calendar of Events.

Views of Lake Dunmore from guided hikes this season.

Retail cannabis sales begin in Vermont, new dispensary opens in Middlebury

By BEN WAGNER
Staff Writer

Retail cannabis sales began in Vermont on Oct. 1, meaning Middlebury College students over the age of 21 can now legally buy marijuana in the state. In conjunction with the introduction of the new retail market, FLORA Cannabis — a state-licensed dispensary just a nine-minute walk from the Davis Family Library — opened on Park Street in downtown Middlebury.

But once they are on campus, students will face an educational sanction if they are caught using or possessing cannabis. According to Middlebury College policies, repeated violations can lead to punishments up to and including suspension and expulsion.

But once they are on campus, students will face an educational sanction if they are caught using or possessing cannabis.

A Sept. 23 email from Dean of Students Derek Doucet to the student body reminded students of the policy in anticipation of the start of retail cannabis sales in Vermont.

According to the email, because cannabis remains illegal under federal law, "Middlebury is therefore obligated to prohibit cannabis on campus or risk losing substantial federal funding, including Title IV financial aid funds for students."

The most recent publicly available Department of Public Safety data from 2019–21 revealed only nine disciplinary referrals for drug abuse violations (which include marijuana use, among other substances), all of which were reported in 2021. For comparison, there were 648 referrals for liquor law violations over the same period.

"I think that [the legalization of recreational sales] won't really affect the amount that is smoked on campus because people already have they're [sic] means of access to it regardless of age," an anonymous student over age 21 said in a written statement to The Campus.

The student emphasized that people who use marijuana on campus already have established systems for obtaining it. Other students also felt that the introduction of state-licensed retail options would not significantly change use on campus.

"Sometimes walking back from my dorm late at night I can smell the [marijuana] scent on the air," Ian Bolton '25 told The Campus. "I don't know that that will necessarily get stronger because of one dispensary in town."

Per legislation effective as of July 1, 2018, adults over 21 years old in Vermont are allowed to possess one ounce of marijuana or five grams of hashish, and cultivate two mature and four immature plants. The same law increased penalties for people over age 21 who knowingly enabled the consumption of marijuana by someone under age 21, and decreased penalties for marijuana possession by those under age 21. Public consumption of marijuana remains illegal under Vermont State law.

On opening day, a Saturday, at around noon, the line outside the door to FLORA Cannabis stretched all the way down the road to Two Brother's Tavern.

On Tuesday, Oct. 4, when The Campus went to report on the new business, there was a line of seven people just six minutes after the doors opened at 11 a.m.

According to reporting from NBC 5, FLORA saw 1,000 customers between Saturday, Oct. 1 and Sunday, Oct. 3.

Notably, on Wednesday morning, FLORA was running low on some inventory. The initial greeter and ID-checker commented on how busy the shop has been since opening. Also notable is the fact that edibles are not yet available at FLORA.

On opening day, ... the line outside the door to Flora Cannabis stretched all the way down the road...

The Campus was unable to reach FLORA Cannabis for an interview.

Customers face two ID-checks — including scans — before they can purchase products at licensed dispensaries in Vermont.

Fake IDs have become harder, or sometimes impossible, to use in recent months as many institutions use software from Bar & Club Stats, a software company. According to Vice, the company recently released a software update which can detect the fakes most underage students use.

"They initially let me in because my ID visibly looked real," said a student under age 21 who tried to purchase marijuana from FLORA Cannabis using a fake ID. "But then when I was in line they asked me to scan it again and it didn't work. They brought out the manager, and she was super respectful, but she basically said, 'Yeah, we're sorry, but if it's not scanning we can't let you through.'"

Nadia Hare/The Middlebury Campus

Dave Silberman, the co-founder of FLORA Cannabis.

The State of Vermont regulates recreational marijuana sales via the Cannabis Control Board, created in 2020. Retail licenses to sell cannabis currently cost $10,000 and several review processes must be completed before a license is granted.

Time will tell whether the legalization of selling recreational marijana will change its use at the college and in the local community. For now, it is clear that marijuana, while still prohibited on campus due to federal law, is in high demand in Middlebury.

Middlebury needs better mental health infrastructure

Notes from the desk

Rain Ji is a managing editor for The Campus and a member of the class of 2023

Content Warning: This article contains mentions of suicide.

It has been almost a year since we lost a student to suicide. It has been almost a year since I was paralyzed by tremendous fear, anger and sadness. I'm not sure there are words that could effectively describe how I felt, feel or will feel.

In the weeks and months following Oct. 20 last year, I remembered the immense amount of support, love and care that poured in from every direction around me. In the aftermath of the hardest time of my life, I saw Middlebury's ability to come together as a community.

But a year later, the college administration has moved on with little to no change of the existing mental health infrastructure that has repeatedly failed its students. There is still a dearth of counselors of color and no on-campus psychiatrist, even after repeated student requests.

There are currently four counselors and five counselors in training. None of them is a counselor of color, according to their biographies on the website. As the school recruits increasingly diverse classes, the mental health resources for students of color fail to keep up. The center needs more staff and resources to serve the community's changing demographics, allowing students to request counselors who share their racial identities. The Middlebury administration needs to realize the needs of students of color, among other students who hold identities that have historically been excluded from higher education. It should not expect the limited existing resources that students of color utilize such as the Anderson Freeman Resource Center (AFC) to provide consistent and reliable emotional support. The AFC is a safe space, but it is not meant to be a crisis hotline.

Furthermore, since Alberto Soto, former director of counseling, left Middlebury last year, there is currently no director. According to Barbara McCall, executive director of Center for Health and Wellness, the new director starts on Nov. 28. The high turnover rate of counselors at the college and the current lack of leadership are extremely concerning.

> In the aftermath of the hardest time of my life, I saw Middlebury's ability to come together as a community.

Of course, counseling services are not the only support system for students. But the new class dean system is failing as well. The junior and senior classes, meaning at least half of the college, have one class dean. If college deans are designed to be "a source for support and guidance for all students as they navigate their Middlebury experience," then how can Scott Barnicle possibly provide such support for around 1400 students, even with his best intentions? Even for the first year and sophomore classes, having one class dean for 800 students is still far from enough. During my time at Middlebury, I witnessed how the dean system was restructured after it decoupled from the commons system. The number of deans has gone from five to three while the number of students has increased. It is simply unrealistic to expect that the dean system can provide timely solutions because deans are overworked and stretched too thin.

Middlebury administration needs to face the inadequacies of mental health support resources on campus and improve them immediately. It may be difficult to hire counselors or psychiatrists as the nation deals with a shortage of campus counselors, but mental health services must be secured through whatever means necessary.

How can students be expected to shoulder the burden of lifting each other up, when the college simply brushes over tragedies with vigils, memorial services and nothing else? How can professors' goodwill be the only option for processing space, when the college simply does not value providing robust mental health help?

The indifference from the college and its lack of action exacerbate the toxic busyness culture on campus that prioritizes academic and athletic success over emotional well-being. The students of Middlebury are compassionate and empathetic, especially in times of extraordinary hardship — yet the same cannot be said for the institution that remains actionless.

For Middlebury to move towards a culture that fights against isolation, it must first acknowledge that the current mental health resources are simply not enough. If the college prides itself on the wide variety of wellness and health resources it offers students during admissions information sessions, it must also follow through on their promises when students actually commit to Middlebury.

> As the school recruits increasingly diverse classes, the mental health resources for students of color fail to keep up.

Middlebury, it has been almost a year, but substantive change is nowhere to be found.

There is no return to business as normal. It should not be a battle just to stay afloat on campus, and no one should suffer because the college fails to act.

It has been almost a year since I lost you. I miss you.

If you are thinking about suicide, please call the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 800-273-TALK (8255).

IT'S NOT JUST ABOUT WAGES — RESPECT IS THE BARE MINIMUM, TOO

Editorial

The editorial represents the opinion of the Middlebury Campus Editorial Board.

This summer, Middlebury implemented a new compensation system for staff that seeks to promote "ownership and impact" for employees. The plan centers on a "skill matrix" which places staff in one of four categories — 'learning,' 'growing,' 'thriving' and 'leading'— which then is used to determine their pay grade.

However, their placement is highly subjective. Employees are placed in one of four categories by their immediate supervisor, who they may not have a relationship with, and who may not be familiar with their day to day roles.

As noted in our news article that covered the plan's mixed reviews in September, these decisions have left some long-term employees of the college feeling disrespected and overlooked. Time spent working at the college is not a factor that plays into the matrix categorization and therefore does not factor into hourly pay. As a result, staff who have worked here for decades can be paid less than new hires.

"It is like a slap in the face to myself and other long-term employees" said one employee who wished to remain anonymous out of fear of retribution. "It's almost like they're pitting us against each other."

Though the minimum wage band has been increased to $17 an hour, many staff believe the college's plan is still missing the mark. "It's more of a respect thing of being left in the dust while these other people are getting sent straight ahead for almost nothing," said another anonymous employee. "I'm still stuck at minimum [wage] even though I've been here twice as long."

This notion of respect is ultimately what the problem boils down to. Employees who have worked at the college for years must be incentivized to stay here. This is especially critical considering how the pandemic took a toll on staff members who worked through it. During 2021 and the fall of 2020, custodial staff had to clean buildings early in the morning while students were still asleep. Due to severe understaffing, they were often taking on multiple roles at once. There was widespread understaffing, which led the college to implement an end of year bonus in hopes of motivating employees to stay.

But now, this new plan discourages long-term employees from continuing to work here. If their pay is not a reflection of years of hard work but rather a result of subjective "supervision" — some employees say they have never been supervised — how can they expect any career satisfaction or mobility? In addition, it has become apparent to us over years of reporting on staff issues that many employees actively distrust or even have bad relationships with their supervisors. Yet these are the individuals who have the oversight to differentiate between the arbitrary labels of what constitutes 'learning,' 'growing,' 'thriving' or 'leading.'

Another frustration some staff have with the new matrix is that they were never made aware of what the expectations were. Custodial staff member Cindie Webb, who has been working at the college for 11 years, said that she did not know her job was supposed to include submitting work orders and running carpet machines, since this had never been communicated to her.

In addition, she was never given the chance to discuss the skills she does possess. "We didn't have a chance to speak for ourselves at all," she told our reporter. "And there is absolutely no appeal process."

In the previous compensation system, Middlebury compared some staff wages to the local market in Addison County. Now, they only compare to other higher educational institutions. However, these "peer" institutions, such as Roger Williams University or Suffolk University, have considerably higher student body enrollment, lower tuition and lower endowments. Therefore, these schools are not good benchmarks for paying Middlebury staff, as this model does not take into account what constitutes a living wage in Vermont.

As AAUP President Laurie Essig told The Campus over email, "Middlebury should not spend money hiring a consulting firm to tell them how much to pay its employees, but rather assess the real costs of living in Addison County as well as the reality that people do not expect to make less over the course of a career."

As the county's largest employer, Middlebury must be a leader — meaning it must treat its employees with consistent respect and gratitude. Long-term employees of the college provide a sense of institutional memory and community continuity compared to students who are only here for four years. One editor noted how the custodian for her house would talk to students living there about raising her kids in Middlebury over the years. It is overly clear that a system that does not value long-term employees also discredits our community as a whole.

Ultimately, Middlebury needs to demonstrate to staff that they are not disposable by adequately compensating, at least partially based on how many years they have been here. But the reality right now is far from that, as many staff feel like they are mere numbers in a larger machine. "As long as you're a body in the building half the time I don't think they really care," Webb said.

THE MIDDLEBURY CAMPUS

EDITOR IN CHIEF
*Abigail Chang **
MANAGING EDITORS
*Rain Ji **
*Tony Sjodin **
EDITORIAL BOARD DIRECTOR
*Lily Laesch **
EDITORS AT LARGE
*Maya Heikkinen **
*Charlie Keohane **
*Rachel Lu **
NEWS DESK
*Brinlea La Barge *†*
*Orly Berke **
*Katie Futterman **
*Lily Jones **
Ryan McElroy
Roya Touran
LOCAL DESK
*Maggie Reynolds *†*
Emily Hogan
*Julia Pepper **
*Susanna Schatz **
OPINIONS DESK
*Daleelah Saleh *†*
*Sarah Miller **
Claire Shapiro
ARTS & CULTURE DESK
*Eliza King Freedman *†*
Maggie Bryan
*Olivia Mueller **
Jack Torpey
SPORTS DESK
*Charles Crounse *†*
Lexi Linafelter
*Sam Lipin **
*Jack McGuire **
MULTIMEDIA DESK
Devin Santikarma
PHOTO DESK
Nadia Hare
Corinne Lowmanstone
Tom Nevins
VISUALS DESK
Arthur Furniss
Thea Volpp
COMMUNICATIONS
*Estelle Martin **
LAYOUT EDITORS
Olivia Kilborn †
Caroline Harding
Emily Hogan
Will Reed
Adelle MacDowell
ONLINE EDITORS
*Eric Burchill *†*
Isaac Mineo
Grace Sandbach
COPY EDITORS
*Madeleine Kaptein **
Manya Kula
Evan Weiss
BUSINESS MANAGER
*David Nicholson **

**Member of Editorial Board*
† Senior Editor

The Campus reserves the right to deny publication of all or part of a submission for any reason. This includes, but is not limited to: the making of assertions based on hearsay; the relation of private conversations; the libelous mention of unverifiable events; the use of vulgar language or personal attacks; unwarranted requests for anonymity.

More information about the paper and its submission policies can be found online at www.middleburycampus.com.

The opinions expressed by contributors to the Opinions section, as well as reviews, columns, editorial comics and other commentary, are views of the individual contributors and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the newspaper. The Campus welcomes letters to the editor at 250 words or less, or opinions submissions at 800 words or less.

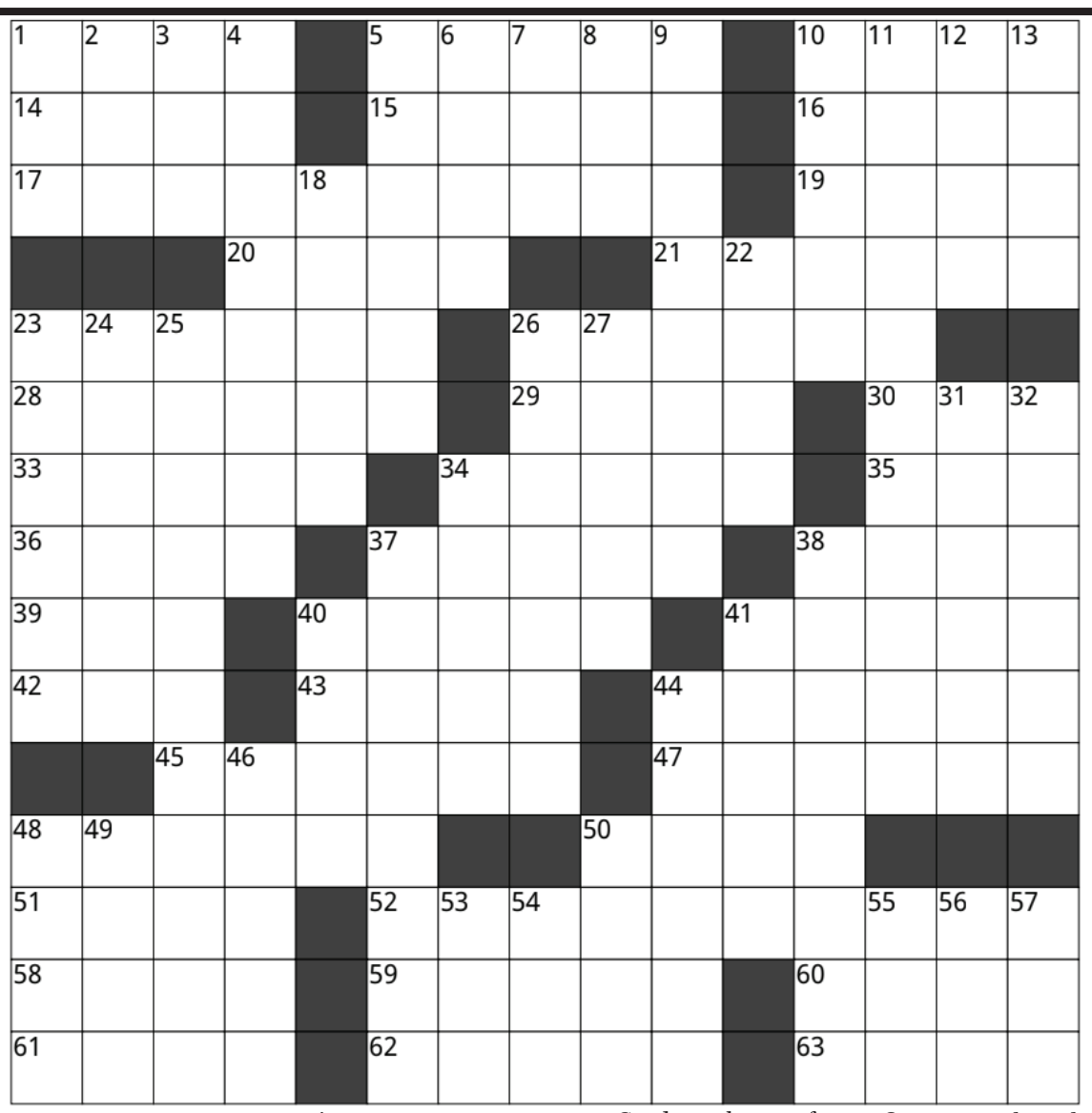
@middleburycampus

@middcampus

The Middlebury Campus

CROSSWORD FOR YOU!

By JOSH HARKINS
Contributing Writer



Across

1 Ballet leap
5 Purple flower
10 Snape portrayer Rickman
14 Disappearing Sea
15 Menzel of Frozen
16 Captain's assistant
17 Abe or Wilson, abbr.
19 What sunlight hitting the clouds may be mistakenfor
20 Loads
21 Whose fables?
23 Where to find big game
26 Boxing weight between light and middle
28 Where to go for a quick checkup
29 Still competing
30 Dishonorable fellow
33 Guinness and Baldwin, for two
34 Part of the body to avoid during cold and fluseason
35 Prefix with -pen and -center
36 Dr. Joan Watson, for 7-Down
37 Capital of Bangladesh
38 Pirate greeting
39 What cows and other ruminantschew
40 Wispy clouds
41 "Knowledge equals power,"for one
42 Biblical suffix
43 Bygone Apple product
44 Where to steer a ship
45 Many toothbrushes
47 Zola and Hirsch, for two
48 Dave Chappelle's debut film role
50 Word that sparked a "-gate" worthy UK scandal in 2012
51 Annoyingly slow
52 Where you are likely completing this puzzle
58 Simple, accordingto Mr. Holmes, abbr.
59 First stringers
60 These, in Tenerife
61 Prince of Motown Marvin
62 Cup in Calais
63 Old cinema conveyance

Down

1 Stylish U.K. car
2 Make a mistake
3 ___ Kwon Do
4 Grace and beauty
5 Brain system well known to Psychology majors
6 Words at weddings
7 Actor Lucy of Elementary
8 ___ Arbor, home of the Wolverines
9 Los Angeles island vacation spot
10 Humor
11 Building on campus attached to the Ross complex
12 Spinning toy
13 Capone nemesis Eliot
18 Sushi wrappers
22 Suffix with kitchen-
23 Rare
24 Completely empty
25 Olympic sport whose College team was undefeated last year
26 Bradley Beal's team
27 Good mushroom for cooking
31 Distance between the Earth and Moon in June
32 Handy folks
34 Ache
37 Madeleine Albright or Samantha Power
38 A Middlebury Otter
40 Hola in Rome
41 Singer Mann
44 Gossip's demand
46 The rain in Spain, for example
48 How much to knock someone down
49 Ciao in Madrid
50 Smartphone predecessors
53 Org. for Panthers playing on the Proctor courts
54 French article
55 Starting a fire, for a match
56 "Insecure" star Issa
57 Fashion label from Fr.

COMMENTS ON THE PERFOMING ARTS SERIES: CLAYTON STEPHENSON

By ALEX STIMPSON
Contributing Writer

The 2022 Gilmore Young Artist Clayton Stephenson performed in Robison hall on Saturday, Oct. 8. His electric performance brought down the house, granting him a standing ovation during the intermission break. Sonata No. 4 in F-sharp Major, Op. 30 was a highlight, wherein Stephenson encouraged audience members to associate colors with the music being played. The composer Alexander Scriabin had synesthesia, a condition where sounds and colors are closely associated. Overall, Stephenson put on a great show, and Middlebury would be lucky to host him again in the future.

COURTESY PHOTOS

NICHE READS: NOVEL RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE ARTS

By SYLVIE SHURE
Contributing Writer

If you struggle to find time for fun reading, this is the spot for you! Niche Reads recommends novels that relate to academic (or other) interests so that you can explore a new book while still feeling productive. Check each week back for more cool books!

Perhaps it's an oversimplification to lump "the arts" together as one interest group, but many of the same themes can apply to different forms of artistic media: art as personal expression, as cultural currency or as a commodity. Even though these recommendations span diverse artistic disciplines, from illustration to filmmaking, the idea of creativity as both a redemptive and corrupting force is a staple in each novel.
These three books are about artists and the ways their art affects their personal lives. If you're majoring in the arts, interested in the arts or just curious, then these books are for you.

"The Amazing Adventures of Kavalier and Clay" by Michael Chabon:

After fleeing Nazi-occupied Prague, young illustrator and escape artist Josef Kavalier teams up with his cousin Sammy Clay to make comic books in Brooklyn. At first, they're only trying to capitalize on a burgeoning trend, but Sammy and Joe soon realize that they are trailblazers in a hugely influential artistic frontier. "The Amazing Adventures of Kavalier and Clay" follows the two cousins, along with the charming Rosa Saks, as they build their lives and careers together.

Chabon's writing is exhilarating, inventive and beautiful, and his characters are achingly human, seeming to take on lives beyond the scope of the novel. At times devastatingly sad, "The Amazing Adventures of Kavalier and Clay" is also funny and heartwarming. Even if you feel apathetic about comic books, these characters lend the story an irresistible appeal.

This expansive book deals tenderly with themes of sexuality, grief and artistic expression. Probably the most accessible novel on this list, "The Amazing Adventures of Kavalier and Clay" packs an emotional punch.

You should read this book if you're looking for a readable style, if you're interested in stories about personal identity or if you like action-packed adventures.

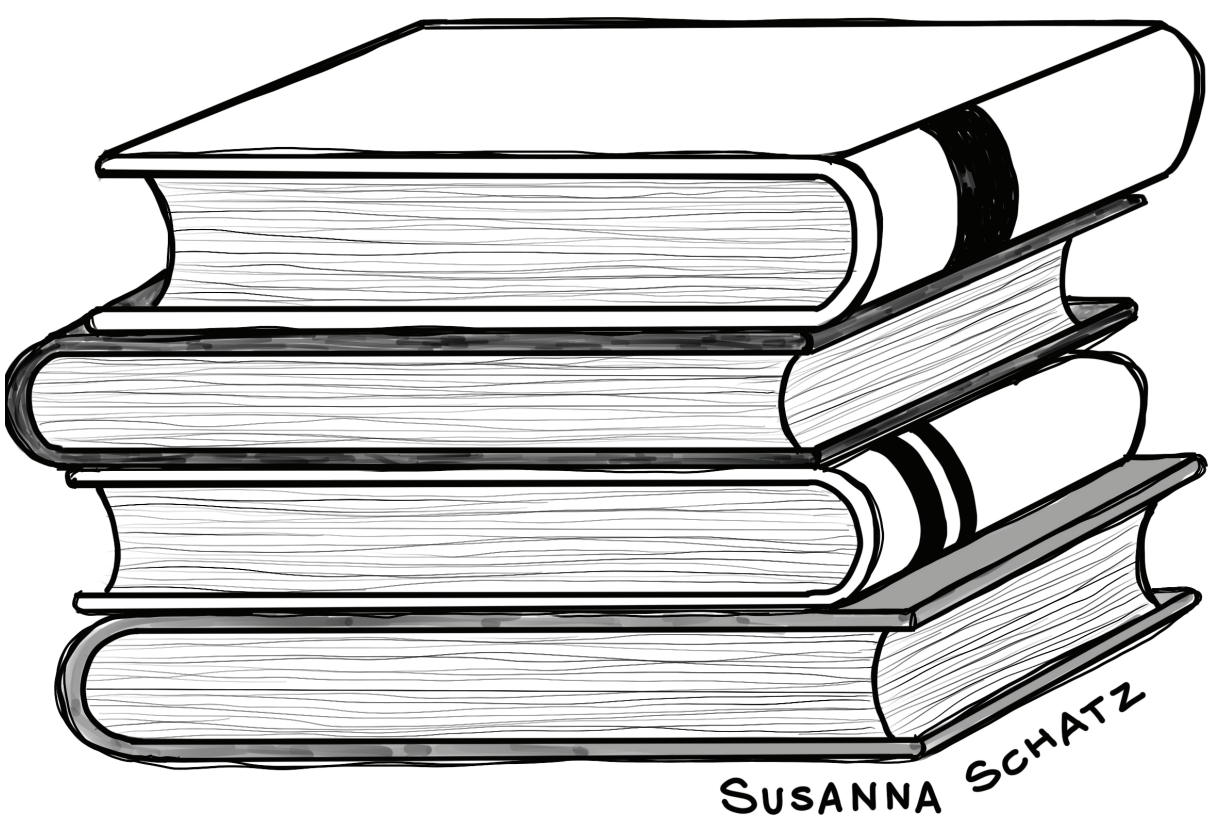
"The Plains" by Gerald Murnane:

In Murnane's alternate-reality version of Australia, the inner plains of the continent are dominated by a strange, ill-defined culture where art supersedes all else. Led by wealthy landowners, the plainsmen are obsessed with mythology, encouraging coastal artists to vie for their patronage in exchange for works of art that attempt to document the ephemeral plains.

This short, bizarre novel is an unforgettable read. Narrated by an aspiring filmmaker, it explores art criticism, the origins of historical narrative and the incomprehensible mundanities of life. Satirizing everything from politics to the concept of art itself, while also playing with time and narrative consistency, this is a mesmerizing and singular book.

With few characters and even less plot, "The Plains" is a portrait of a people obsessed with portraiture, an unsettling account made palatable by its dry sense of humor. If you pick up a copy of "The Plains," don't be fooled by its thin spine; this little book is packed full of beautiful prose and philosophical depth.

You should read this book if you like thought-provoking reads, if you're interested in the ethics of art as a product or if you want to read a unique novel.



"The Sea, the Sea" by Iris Murdoch:

In "The Sea, the Sea," nothing is as it seems. When famous English actor Charles Arrowby retires to a remote seaside cottage, his past and present come into volatile conflict with each other. After an unexpected reunion with his first love, Charles's peaceful retirement is completely upended.

"The Sea, the Sea" is a slow burn and at times a difficult read, but it is incredibly rewarding. Though rife with densely beautiful descriptive passages, the story centers on riveting action. It can be best described as a thriller, with shocking and disturbing revelations throughout.

Hauntingly beautiful and intent on subverting expectations, "The Sea, the Sea" is ultimately an argument for empathy and against ego. With its eerie, supernatural atmosphere, this novel would be a great choice for the Halloween season.

You should read this book if you like suspenseful mysteries, if you're up for a denser read or if you're interested in psychologically complex characters.

Cliff Hanger: In "Edge of the Earth," climate is no longer a side story

By MAGGIE BRYAN
Arts & Culture Editor

In Maggie Bryan's column "Cliff-Hanger," she reviews outdoor films and explores the power of adventure as a catalyst to conversations over modern issues.

In the opening scene of "Episode I: Into the Void" a drone swirls around alpinists Elena Hight, Jeremy Jones and Griffin Post as they trudge up a 70-degree incline on Mount Bertha, Alaska. Fast-paced string music is interrupted only by the sounds of crampons crunching into snow and ice and the shaky breaths of the climbers. From its start, HBO and Teton Gravity Research's (TGR) partnership series "Edge of the Earth" makes clear its willingness to confront the vulnerable experience of being human in the wilderness, specifically in the age of climate change.

"Into the Void," the first episode of the four-part series, follows Hight, Jones and Post as they attempt the first ski and snowboard descent of the East ridge of Mount Bertha in Glacier Bay National Park. Getting to Mount Bertha is a grueling journey in itself, one that requires a six-day boat journey and fifteen miles of battling through the snow. The episode devotes a significant portion of its story arc to that journey, emphasizing the importance of place and the effect that the area around Mount Bertha has on all who experience it.

This sense of place is centered around an interview with Heather Lgeik'i Powell, a member of the Tlingit people. The Tlingit have lived in the area for 10,000 years, surviving two ice ages. Hight, Jones and Post meet with Powell before their journey, and her thoughts overlay gloomy shots of the boat being packed for the journey, which are intercepted by bright, stunning landscapes of the area. The effect is one that paints a harrowing portrait of humans' relationship with the land, a complicated hierarchy that the Tlingit have had to acknowledge for thousands of years but that non-indigenous Americans are perhaps just now coming to terms with.

The episode reaches its climax as the trio prepares for the final leg of their journey from base camp to the summit of Mount Bertha. However, audiences know from the beginning of the episode that the mission is successful. The true moment of conflict, therefore, arises from a tension deeper than the uncertainty of ascending any mountain: the relationship between humans and our climate. "My life is based around these storms, so to actually like to be out there and feel the power of nature, I love it," Jones says. Outdoor recreationists have long sought the feeling of being microscopic, subordinate to the incomprehensible strength of the natural world. As wide angles capture the size of the tents relative to the surrounding mountains, it's impossible for viewers not to feel that vulnerability.

The main source of vulnerability is powerlessness not in the face of weather, but rather the unpredictability of weather as caused by anthropogenic climate change. After a large snowstorm that almost prevented the characters' arrival at base camp, audiences are only able to revel in the beauty of the landscape for moments, as the scene is suddenly interrupted by clip after clip of heat-induced avalanches across the mountains. What was once serene and picturesque rapidly transforms into a scene that is at once messy, scary and heartbreaking. The moment is summarized by an announcement into the silence by one of the camera operators that Juneau, Alaska, reached its record temperature for April that day: 70 degrees.

As the team waits for their window to summit Mount Bertha, Jones reflects on his relationship with climate. Within the vast landscape, the camera zooms in on his watercolor journal, then flashes to an old-school TV frame which displays clips of Jones on Capitol Hill, lobbying for his organization Protect our Winters (POW). When Jones says he bases his life around these storms, he means it. He founded POW out of a lifelong love for winter and a recognition that climate change affects more than just recreation opportunities. "The least of our worries is going to be a chairlift moving," Jones says. POW recently helped lobby for the Inflation Reduction Act, securing billions of dollars for the fight against climate change.

Courtesy Photo

"Into the Void," follows three alpinists as they trudge up Mount Bertha, Alaska.

Pia Contreras/The Middlebury Campus

The first episode of "Edge of the Earth" represents the future of the outdoor film industry, one in which climate isn't a side story, but is woven into the central plot. The following episodes tackle other issues, from eating disorders to deforestation, with a level of authenticity that is deeply needed within the outdoor industry. Ultimately, the series proves that sincerity, vulnerability and exhilaration can and must go hand in hand, yielding profound results.

REEL CRITIC: "Breaking"

By JACK TORPEY
Arts & Culture Editor

After spending the early years of his career known only for playing a severely underdeveloped supporting character in Disney's fleet of modern "Star Wars" films, Englishman John Boyega has finally received his proper introduction as an actor. It comes in "Breaking," the debut feature from director Abi Damaris Corbin that tells the heartbreaking true story of Lance Corporal Brian Brown-Easley. In 2017, the 33-year-old African American Marine veteran held up an Atlanta bank to protest Veterans Affairs' failure to pay him the disability check he needed to survive. Boyega is powerful in his portrayal of Brown-Easley, at once channeling the crazed recklessness of Al Pacino in Sidney Lumet's "Dog Day Afternoon" and evoking sympathy for a good man driven to criminality by a society that refuses to care for him. But for all the merits of his performance, "Breaking" is not Boyega's movie, nor Corbin's, nor any of the other impressive actors or crew. Rather, it belongs to the men and women who served the United States overseas only to be forgotten upon returning home, especially those — like Brown-Easley — whose fight to be heard is further beaten down by racism.

When "Breaking" begins, Boyega's Brown-Easley is being escorted in handcuffs out of a Veterans Affairs building. Why, we do not know yet. Corbin quickly brings Brown-Easley's life into focus, introducing his ex-wife, Cassandra (Olivia Washington), and his young daughter, Kiah (London Covington). Brown-Easley speaks to Kiah on the phone while walking the Atlanta streets at night, promising to fulfill her wish for a puppy. But as the time on his cellular plan runs out mid-call, and he disappears alone into a derelict motel room, the reason for Brown-Easley's removal from the VA building becomes clear. The next day, the defeated ex-Marine will walk into a Wells Fargo branch with a homemade bomb and take two employees (Nicole Beharie and Selenis Leyva) hostage, demanding an audience with the media so he can speak his truth about the VA's negligence to grant him the financial support he was promised.

"Breaking" is through and through a terrifically acted film. Every character, from Beharie's frightened yet resolute bank manager to Jeffrey Donovan's racially prejudiced law enforcement officer, is imbued with substantive personality by their actors, ensuring that this real-life story is populated with people of real feeling. Especially noteworthy is the late Michael K. Williams in the role of ex-Marine and Police Sergeant Eli Bernard, the negotiator who makes the closest contact with Brown-Easley. With Boyega's character in a state of crisis, the panicked hostages fearing for their lives and the frenzy of police and reporters outside the bank stoking the chaos, Williams' Sergeant Bernard provides the film's sole calming presence. His low, gruff voice reassures Brown-Easley as the two men communicate over the phone, Bernard comforting the distressed Marine by recalling his own service in the corps. He then calls Ms. Brown-Easley and assures her that her ex-husband is a good man, one he is determined to bring out of the bank alive. Strikingly offset by Bernard's fierce outbursts against reporters and police jeopardizing the security of the delicate situation, these tender moments earn intense sympathy for Williams' character. Should this be the final posthumous role we see him in, it is unquestionably an admirable one.

Only one character in "Breaking" is more sympathetic than Sergeant Bernard, and that is Brian Brown-Easley himself. John Boyega honors the man by playing him on-screen just as he was in life: a gentle, kind-hearted soul pushed to extreme ends by the pressures of circumstance. As Boyega initiates the holdup, he softly addresses Leyva's bank teller as "Ma'am," feverishly apologizing after raising his voice in a moment of panic. When a supposed gunshot rings out, he throws himself on top of the woman to protect her, scurrying off when she screams and stammering that it was just a "reflex." Everything that Boyega says and does reveals a man trying to appear as a threat only to be betrayed by the goodness of his own nature. It is a complex, painfully endearing performance, and it is sure to raise the young actor above the doldrums of his "Star Wars" past.

Courtesy Photo

"Breaking" was released on Aug. 26, 2022

For a film so dominated by acting, it's ironic that the most lasting contribution of "Breaking" is the product of a shot. In a flashback, we are shown one of Brown-Easley's many failed attempts to retrieve his missing disability check from Veterans Affairs. As he walks out of the VA office empty handed, the camera leaves him and tracks through the waiting room. It is inundated with veterans, men and women, all blank in the face, motionless. Brown-Easley reenters the frame, and there is a cut back to the action within the bank. In just a single ten-second tracking shot, "Breaking" makes the core statement for which it exists: America is failing its veterans.

While only 7% of the U.S. population are ex-military, nearly 13% of the country's homeless have served in the armed forces. For Black veterans like Brown-Easley, who believed that he would be shot by police immediately upon stepping outside the bank, the outlook is even more grim: Black veterans make up a third of all homeless veterans. This reality cannot be tolerated — people need to know, and action needs to be taken. "Breaking" did not set any box office records, but if it can raise awareness of the plight of U.S veterans struggling to provide for themselves and their families, that will be a victory bigger than any dollar amount. Then, we can hope for a day when nobody will ever be driven to do what Brian Brown-Easley did in 2017. Then, our veterans will be welcomed home.

COCOON PERFORMERS SHARE STORIES ON THEME OF "LOST AND FOUND"

By SOPHIA AFSAR-KESHMIRI
Contributing Writer

Content Warning: This article contains mentions of suicide.

Middlebury Moth-Up held its 10th annual Cocoon event at Robison Hall on Friday, Oct. 7. The organization, inspired by the storytelling podcast "The Moth," puts on smaller, student storytelling events monthly. Moth-Up Co-President Elissa Asch '22.5 explained the guidelines before each event: Stories must be true, told without notes and cannot run longer than 10 minutes.

Cocoon differs from monthly Moth-Up performances in that it is only held once a year, and it welcomes students as well as faculty, staff and community members to perform.

Student storytellers Grace Sokolow '24, Seth Brown '24, Frankie Shiner '23, Professor of Religion Ata Anzali and community members Rainwalker Winterpainter and Marlon Hyde shared stories that fit the evening's theme, "Lost and Found."

One of the unique aspects of the evening was the audience make-up; most Moth-Up audiences are students, but Friday night's audience was filled with a mix of community members, students and their families — as the event coincided with Fall Family Weekend.

Co-presidents Asch and Kristen Morgenstern '24 kicked off the storytelling by reading audience responses to the question "What's the strangest thing you've lost or found?" Before every Moth-Up event, the audience is posed a question related to the theme and their responses are read in between performances. These "palate cleansers" inspired particularly funny responses. A parent in the audience shared that they found their child's umbilical cord in their purse after losing it the night before. Another audience member wrote, "I lost my virginity once, I have yet to find it."

All three Middlebury students told stories of lost and found love. Sokolow performed first, taking the audience through a journey to find hope. As most love stories go, there were highs and lows throughout the tale, and Sokolow's tone of voice and body language reflected them. She wore her story emotionally and physically, and bore the weight of the heartbreak she experienced. But, as she recounted the found summer romance that she said gave her "hope to keep looking for that next first kiss," she showed visible relief.

Next came Shiner. They told a story of a different kind of love than Sokolow: platonic love. The story began with middle school Shiner, wanting to find a best friend. They made the audience laugh with jokes and anecdotes flooded with the relatable whimsy of childhood innocence, the kind that makes us remember each of our own childhoods. One such story they told was a middle school best friend test, in which they would text others a list of questions to see if they were fit to be a best friend. Shiner shared that they lost a love amid a betrayal by the person they thought was their best friend at the time. The story took a sweet turn when they recounted the story of how they met their best friend at Middlebury. They described their best friend as their "go-to person." It was simply heartwarming, and it made the audience members want to go give their best friends a hug.

The final student performer was Brown. Brown's love stories were not his own, but those that he's observed working as a boat captain. In contrasting anecdotes of managing a rowdy bachelorette party celebrating an exciting moment in the bride's love story, and a family's boat outing gone horribly wrong that threatened a marriage, he showed two very different sides of the same coin. Brown cracked jokes throughout, but beyond this, he grounded his audience well. Brown transformed the auditorium into a sunny day on the lake through vivid details. He also achieved this with strong characterization of the people he encounters on the lake, such as "Budweiser Dale" and the rowdy bachelorettes.

Most of it took place on the lake and he transported listeners there from the auditorium as he described in vivid detail supporting characters like "Budweiser Dale" and places such as "Party Cove."

Community members Rainwalker Winterpainter and Marlon Hyde also stuck to similar themes; both of their stories concluded with each finding a new name. Winterpainter took the audience through miniature stories, each about how he got one part of his name. There were four in total, one for "rain," one for "walker," one for "winter" and finally one for "painter." This structure connected Winterpainter's story to the theme differently than the other members; he was the only one whose story concluded with multiple found things (his four names).

Daleelah Saleh/The Middlebury Campus

Seth Brown '24 transformed the auditorium into a sunny day on the lake through vivid details.

In a similar fashion, Hyde's story ended with him receiving a new name during a trip to South Africa. During the performance Hyde recounted that he took the trip after losing a second friend to suicide. To heal, he decided to travel. Hyde's story was structured very differently than Winterpainter's; it was one continuous narrative leading to the conclusion. Additionally, Hyde embedded original poems while telling the story. Cocoon is inherently a very vulnerable and intimate event, and Hyde's use of poetry significantly added to the intimacy of his performance. Each poem captured the way Hyde was feeling about an experience in great detail and extended the amount of time audience members had to ponder the way he felt about an event. This allowed the audience more time to process how he was feeling, and internalize and empathize with the story that Hyde was telling.

Anzali also told an extremely emotional story about his encounter with the morality police when he grew up in Iran. He explained for the audience that the morality police back in his teenage years, was a "vigilante" this is essentially a vigilante group enforcing the rules of the Iranian government, often in a violent and forceful way. Following the experience, he woke up the next morning and felt as though he had lost and found a new person within himself. He also said that the encounter helped him discover his passion for religion. Anzali dedicated his final minutes on stage to the women in Iran currently putting their lives at risk for their rights and freedom. His last-final words of the evening were those being screamed through the streets of Iran: "Women, life, freedom."

If you'd like to become a Moth-Up storyteller, submit your pitch at go/mothstory.

FROM THE ARCHIVES: TWENTIETH-CENTURY PHOTOS OF MARS AND JUPITER

By TIFFANY LI
Contributing Writer

New to the Middlebury Campus this year, "From the Archives" is an opportunity for various writers to visit the Middlebury Special Collections and write about a different artifact each week. The Special Collections boasts over 10,000 historic items, and through this column we encourage writers to explore not only the college's history, but also the history of the world around us.

Astronomy news is abuzz. On Sept. 26, Jupiter came the closest it has been to Earth since 1963 — almost sixty years ago. Additionally, the James Webb Space Telescope, launched in December 2021, sent back its first images to Earth in July of this year. Aside from being visually stunning, these groundbreaking photos are also taken in the infrared spectrum, revealing previously unknown information about the universe.

Given these exciting developments, taking a look back at the 1909 photos of Mars and Jupiter in Middlebury's Special Collection, located in the Davis Family Library, feels particularly timely. Mounted on cardboard in a patterned black frame, they are surprisingly tiny. Each one is only a few centimeters across. They show the two planets against a pitch-black backdrop. Jupiter's distinctive bands are visible, as are the dark shadows on Mars' surface.

The Jupiter images were taken by astronomer Earl C. Slipher, and the images of Mars were taken by astronomer Percival Lowell. Lowell once used the Mars images to support his theory of extraterrestrial life. He believed that the shadows on its surface, which have what appear to be geometric outlines, were Martian-made canals transporting water from Mars' polar regions to its equator. Lowell's theories influenced author H. G. Wells' sci-fi book "The War of the Worlds." Since then, it's been confirmed that the shadows' seemingly straight borders are an optical illusion.

Lowell established the Lowell Observatory in Flagstaff, Ariz., the location where the photos were taken using the 24-inch Alvan Clark refractor telescope. The telescope was first used on July 23, 1896. Using the same telescope, astronomer V. M. Slipher made observations about spiral galaxies that provided the first evidence of an expanding universe. It was also used to produce lunar maps and allow astronauts to familiarize themselves with the lunar surface in preparation for the Apollo 11 mission.

The historical ownership of these photos also involves some of Middlebury College's most decorated faculty. They were originally owned by renowned Professor of Physics Ernest Calvin Bryant '91 (1867-1942), who went on to found the Physics Department in 1912. His obituary was written by fellow Professor of Physics Benjamin F. Wissler.

"For many years he was voted 'Middlebury's most valuable teacher,'" Wissler wrote. "Professor Bryant served longer than any other member of Middlebury's teaching staff." At the time, that meant 45 years at the institution.

The images then fell into the hands of Frank Winkler, the Gamaliel Painter Bicentennial Professor Emeritus of Physics. In 2014, the college established a professorship in Winkler's name, which Professor of Astrophysics Eilat Glikman currently holds.

"Winkler joined the Middlebury faculty in 1969 and has taught nearly every course in the physics curriculum during his 45 years at the College," according to the announcement of the professorship.

"We're thrilled that this professorship will honor Frank's long and distinguished career at Middlebury," Professor of Physics Noah Graham said in the announcement. "Frank has shaped and guided our department through a period of remarkable progress."

Courtesy of Middlebury Special Collections

The Mars and Jupiter photos were stored in foam inside an acid-free, humidity resistant cardboard box.

In 2015, Winkler donated the photos to Special Collections, along with a letter explaining their origins.

Rebekah Irwin, director and curator of Special Collections, said the photos' record of provenance, or history of ownership, was unknown.

"All we know is the history that Professor Winkler shared with us, and that's very common with gifts or donations," Irwin said.

According to Irwin, many Special Collections items are acquired as donations and gifts. She also buys items from rare book dealers and auction houses.

"In many ways it's similar to the museum," Irwin said, referring to the Middlebury College Museum of Art in the Mahaney Arts Center.

Some purchases are also made specifically for certain courses.

"Normally we do that in collaboration with professors who are teaching classes," Irwin said.

The Special Collections team has a special process for storing photographs. The Mars and Jupiter photos were stored in foam inside an acid-free, humidity resistant cardboard box, which Irwin says is standard practice.

"This space, 101 in the library, has its own heating and cooling system," Irwin said. "We maintain a different temperature and humidity, and we do that because it's better for paper, filament and photography."

The space has a special fire suppression system, as sprinklers would damage the archived material, and a safe that is fireproof and bombproof. Motion sensors are in place to prevent potential theft. Special Collections staff also keep a look out for certain bugs that consume paper, which especially threaten rare and antique books.

Irwin pointed out another rare item that is related to the history of astronomy in the library's collection, a 1653 edition of the book, "Petri Gassendi Institutio Astronomica."

Written by French astronomer Pierre Gassendi, the book discusses the ideas of Danish astronomer Tycho Brahe and Prussian polymath Nicolaus Copernicus. It also includes Galileo Galilei's "Sidereus Nuncius," an astronomical treatise which was highly controversial when first published in 1610, and Johannes Kepler's "Dioptrice," an investigation of telescopic lens construction for astronomy, first published in 1611.

Interested readers can learn more about the Special Collections's acquisitions process and storage protocol, as well as view Gassendi's treatise and the images of Mars and Jupiter, by scheduling a visit to Davis Family Library 101 where the collections are located.

CAPTAIN'S CORNER: KENAN ULKU-STEINER '22.5, MEN'S SOCCER

By CAPTAIN RUDOLPH
Staff Writer

Welcome to this week's installment of Captain's Corner, where I sit down with a captain of a Middlebury College athletics team to talk Captain to captain about the role, the team and their life at Middlebury. This week I got a chance to catch up with Kenan Ulku-Steiner '22.5 after an impressive week of games including a 1–0 win over Connecticut College that has given the team a four-game win streak. Kenan is one of three super-senior Feb captains that is looking to lead his team deep into the NESCAC and NCAA tournaments.

Captain Rudolph: Let's start off talking about this past weekend, you gave the assist on what ended up being the game winning goal against Connecticut College, the defending national champions. How did the team feel about the successful weekend?

Kenan Ulku-Steiner: It was a huge weekend overall. We were in a good spot in the league, but we knew if we took care of this weekend, we'd be in a great spot. We played really well against Colby and used that momentum to move into day two of a doubleheader weekend. Doubleheaders can be tough, but we knew what we had to do. Playing against a really talented team in Connecticut College, we came out strong and that early goal was all Eujin [Chae '25]. He's had some magic moments on the field this year and he's got an incredible right foot. All that I had to do was put it in front of him and he did the rest. To have a six point weekend makes us feel really excited that we're coming together at the right time. I think we can make a deep run into the playoffs.

CR: How has the organization of the team changed this year? What's the mentality like in your fifth year?

KU: I've been doing this for a long time and decided together with my four senior classmates to come back for one last season, and we've really enjoyed it. We love this team and don't want to leave just yet when we think we can make one last run happen. Last year was hectic having two full classes of teammates that hadn't played a season to that point; however, this year it feels like we have a solid team of players with experience under their belts who have played big NESCAC minutes. So, we're just trying to stay together and move forward. We've been playing really well and the vibes on campus are great. Throughout my five years we have become more and more diverse, and I think that has contributed to our success in all sorts of things on the field as well as on campus. Being a fifth year, I'm trying to soak in the moment, keep my old body going and help my team win as many games as we can.

CR: Which English Premier League team has been your favorite to follow growing up?

KU: That's a tough one for me because I am sort of a fair-weather Leicester City F.C. fan. I have loved watching Premier League morning games throughout high school and still do, but now that we play on Saturdays, it can be tough sometimes. I do have to say that I sort of bandwagoned when Leicester won the championship in 2015 in what was a fairytale run, but I've been following them closely ever since. I love the Premier League. It's the best league in the world no matter what other people try to tell you.

CR: How would you describe the role of the leaders of the team?

KU: Mike [McFarlane '22.5] and Liam [Sloan '22.5] were captains last season as well, so they have experience under their belt, but I joined as a captain this year. I'd say we balance each other out really well. We have fire and compassion and love for the boys. Throughout my freshman and sophomore years I did not get as much playing time as they did, so in this captain role now, I have a valuable perspective on the struggles of not starting and not getting the minutes you want. Guys hopefully look up to us and see that even if you don't get what you want right from the jump, things will come together. And honestly, I don't think we are the only three leaders. I think really it's the five of us who were seniors last year including Noah [Hannam '22.5] and Brendan [Barry '22.5] as well. Having had this long experience, we know what we want to build, and I think that our soccer perspectives have changed. We obviously still love soccer and love playing, but even more we are building a culture and relationships that will last, which ends up bringing on even better soccer. We are best friends so it's easy to support each other in moments when it's great and moments when it's tough. Honestly, I think it's the leadership of the five of us that really makes us successful.

CR: What's your go-to study spot on campus?

KU: I am a Davis guy when I have to be, and we are approaching that time of year again. I really like the carrels on the first floor when I have to focus in, but the tables upstairs are fun if I know I can socialize a little more and don't have to focus as much. I try to switch up though. Proctor is great too. If I can stay there for three or four hours and get a couple meals in while I study, I don't mind that.

Kenan Ulku-Steiner '22.5 throws the ball into play for the Panthers. COURTESY OF TROY MCFARLAND

CR: What's the biggest home game of the year coming up?

KU: Our next big NESCAC game is this Saturday, Oct. 15, at 12:00 p.m. against Trinity [College] at home at South Street Field. It's alumni weekend, so we'll have alumni of the program coming back to town and it's senior day. There's a lot of celebrations to be had, but at the end of the day, we still need to take care of business. They are a good team that we tied last year. Knowing that they are dangerous, we really need to step up to take three points from the contest because there are not a lot of league games left.

CR: What are you currently studying, and do you have a post-graduation plan?

KU: I am an International Politics and Economics and Spanish double major. I've loved my poli-sci and economics electives especially as they've gotten more specific as I've gone on. I'm still figuring out what the next steps hold, applying to all sorts of positions. I'm truly soaking in the liberal arts mentality of applying to industries all over the place. I am waiting to hear back from some places, but trying to soak this in and worry about real life when it comes. Maybe I'll take a trip down to Patagonia with all the fifth years of the team because I didn't get the chance to go abroad.

Editor's Note: This interview has been lightly edited for brevity and clarity.

CREW HOSTS VERMONT CUP

By CHARLES CROUNSE
Senior Sports Editor

The Middlebury crew team lost a tightly contested regatta this past weekend as they hosted UVM for the biannual Vermont Cup. The event was held at nearby Lake Dunmore.

The Panthers began the regatta strongly, with the men's team taking a comfortable win in the varsity category to give Middlebury a 3–0 lead in points. That lead was soon diminished as UVM won a hard-fought race in the women's novice category, pulling back a point for the Catamounts. UVM continued to take slim victories in the women's junior varsity and varsity races, handing the Catamounts a 6–3 victory over Middlebury.

"The race itself was brutal, with random gusts of headwind," said Sachin Patel '24, co-captain of the men's team alongside Chris O'Connell '24. "Getting to beat UVM's men's team was great and I look forward to seeing them at the next couple of races we go to."

Despite the unexpected loss, which ends Middlebury's multi-year win streak at the regatta, the team remained rather upbeat. Patel was particularly full of praise for the younger members of the team.

"The novices are doing incredibly well," he said. "I'm surprised they were able to get into racing shape so quickly."

Women's team captain Isabel Tseng '23, who co-captains the team with Annie Holleman '23, was of a similar disposition.

"Although we lost the cup, our team is in a better position than it has ever been," Tseng commented. "On the water we have some of the strongest varsity rowers and most promising novice rowers; however, what is most exciting is our team dynamic off the water."

The team's attention now turns to the final three races of the season, with only the Head of the Snake, the Head of the Charles and the Head of the Fish remaining. All three races will be in the 5k discipline before the team transitions over to 2k races for the spring.

The Middlebury men's varsity boat cuts through choppy waters on Lake Dunmore. COURTESY OF COLIN BOURQUE

"Our main goal now is to make sure that we can learn to effectively pace ourselves over the course of these 5k races," Patel said. "The second goal is to try our best to requalify for the Head of the Charles Regatta 2023."

Middlebury crew will return to action this Saturday, Oct. 15, at the Head of the Snake Regatta on Lake Quinsigamond in Worcester, Mass.

PFL Weekly

By COLE SIEFER, DAN URCHUR, BEN WAGNER & SAM MCGARRAHAN
Podcast Hosts

This week, our PFL Weekly hosts dissect a highly successful slate of Fall Family Weekend games. Football advances to 4–0 with a stunner over perennial rival Williams College. Volleyball's Gabbie O'Toole '25 leads the NESCAC assist tally by 111. Field hockey wins its 50th home game in a row. Men's soccer beats defending national champions Connecticut College 1–0 as goalkeeper Ryan Grady moves into second place in the all-time Panther shutout rankings. Women's soccer goes 2–0 on the weekend, snagging wins against Colby College and Connecticut College. Our hosts caught up with midfielder Emma Binks '23.5, who scored both of the weekend's game-winning-goals. Binks gives us the scoop on leadership, preparation and... sea animals?

Listen to the PFL Weekly podcast on spotify

Courtesy of Caroline Harding

Seven questions with Tatum Peskin, women's cross country

By CHARLIE KEOHANE
Editor at Large

Tatum Peskin '24, an environmental economics major from Basking Ridge, N.J., is amidst a competitive junior cross country season. In this installment of seven questions, Peskin discusses how she got into the sport, her favorite pre-race traditions and her hidden gem running spots.

Charlie Keohane: How did you start running?

Tatum Peskin: I started running when I was really young with my parents because they would force me to do 5ks ever since I was like eight years old. This was when my dad was training for a marathon, so it became the family thing. I absolutely hated it, and I would literally complain about my cramps the whole time. But then, I started liking it more when I realized that my favorite part of soccer was the running. So I converted.

CK: How is the season going so far?

TP: My season has been going pretty well. I've felt a lot stronger than in previous years, and I think it's nice running with the pack this year. I think our pack running has been really good. We've only had one race where we were racing all out, so I'm excited to see what will happen in the next races coming up. It definitely went a lot better than expected for me because I was able to stick with the pack more than I expected.

CK: Do you have any fun pre-meet rituals or traditions you like to follow?

TP: Aside from blasting music before races, I also have this superstition that I started in high school, where I have to wear a pre-wrap headband for every race. I've been told it makes me look like a soccer girl, but that's my one soccer thing that's carried over. I know it actually doesn't affect my race at all, but it's a fun thing and makes me feel race-day-ready.

CK: What is something people might not know about cross country?

TP: I think a lot of people don't realize that cross country and track are not the same thing. Basically, all cross country runners run track, but cross country is through the woods and not on the track. It's all long distance, so we're all running the same event, a 6k. Men run an 8k.

Courtesy of George Madison
Tatum Peskin '24 (left) running with teammate Lucca Franz '26 (right) at the Mike Woods Invitational on Oct. 1 in Geneseo, N.Y.

CK: What do you like about the Middlebury team specifically?

TP: I love the Middlebury team's attitude toward running. I think in high school, a lot of people were dreading working out and races, but Middlebury is the direct opposite. Everyone gets very pumped and excited to work out and race, and I think a lot of people have said as they see us warming up that it looks like we're having a little party, blasting music and singing along to songs.

CK: What is your ideal pre-race dining hall meal?

TP: For the morning, I usually have a bagel with peanut butter and banana — that's always been my little pre-race meal — and coffee.

CK: Favorite spot to run in Vermont?

TP: I would say a nice South Street run is one of the greatest things, especially when the leaves are turning. Also, Ridge Street is very pretty. I also love running by the cows. When South Street has cows and leaves, I just love it.

Tatum Peskin '24 and the Panthers are competing next at the Connecticut College Invitational in New London, Conn. on Oct. 15.

Editor's Note: This interview has been lightly edited for brevity and clarity.